

**Kent County Council**

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**Service Specification for the Delivery of  
Connexions Services in Kent by  
Connexions Partnership Kent & Medway  
Limited**

**April 2008 – March 2010**

**Draft Version 5 : 29<sup>th</sup> August 2007**

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## 1. Overview of Services to be delivered

This specification covers the Connexions Services to be delivered by Connexions Partnership Kent & Medway Ltd under contract to Kent County Council. In summary, services consist of:

- The provision of information, advice, guidance and support to young people aged 13-19 (up to 25 for young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)) primarily focusing on education, employment and training matters
- Providing support to young people to enter and remain in education, employment and training (EET), including acting as the lead agency for the achievement of the Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) LAA/PSA target, and placing specific emphasis on supporting vulnerable groups of young people and/or groups who face particular barriers to entering and remaining in EET
- The provision of associated services to other stakeholders, for example, support to schools and parents
- The provision of supporting services and functions, for example, staff training and development

## 2. Services to be delivered

Services to be delivered are as follows:

### **A: Schools, Vocational Centres/Provision, FE/HE Colleges and Work Based Learning Providers - 13-19**

i). Establish a Partnership Agreement with each school, centre, college and provider based on its learner needs profile and produce a Delivery Plan agreed with the school/centre to implement this.

ii). Provide specialist, professional impartial Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) for young people and enable access to intensive support for learners in need of additional assistance including:

- Individual IAG support to develop Individual Action Plans
- Group IAG sessions to assist young people in making choices
- Act as a source of advice and support for all agencies involved with young people
- Specific IAG guidance on curriculum learning options in KS4, including inputs to PSHE programmes
- Provide advice to school staff developing the school's Careers Education and Guidance curriculum offer
- Information on choices to individuals and year groups
- Support for Investors In Careers development work

- Piloting IAG innovation in vocational centres, and with new Diplomas
- iii). Work with school staff at KS3 and KS4 to assess which learners are at risk of disengaging and offer/enable access to intensive Personal Adviser (PA) support (including CAF and undertaking Lead Professional function where appropriate)
  - iv). Work closely with the school to undertake an annual destination survey for all Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 leavers between September and December.
  - v). In co-operation with the education or learning provider establish and maintain a place where all students may self - refer and have access to specialist, professional IAG and support dependent upon their needs. Support the provision of specialist, professional Impartial Advice and Guidance (IAG) information materials and resources for this facility and assist school staff, college, centre and Work Based Learning (WBL) provider staff with advice as to sources of IAG materials and resources.
  - vi). For independent schools, continue existing partnership arrangements and support.
  - vii). Provide young people with support on making informed learning and career choices through one to one advice, group work, input to PSHE, and drop in sessions.
  - viii). In association with the school, college or provider, identify the intended destination of each student at the end of the academic year. Track those students with no known destination over the summer and provide appropriate support to increase the number progressing to EET.
  - ix). Work with school based & FE Pastoral Support staff to assess those young people at risk of disengaging and provide access to support to increase the number remaining in education or training. Once notified, contact learners who have dropped out of education to seek to re – engage them with EET opportunities.
  - x). Work closely with WBL providers to make appropriate referrals to Entry to Employment/WBL and support progress of young people (for example, attending reviews) to achieve positive destinations to education, employment or training

## **B: Connexions Access Points (CAPs) and Community Outreach Services**

- i). Provide Connexions Access Points in Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Folkestone, Gravesend, Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge and Ramsgate (+ Margate drop in)

Provide core opening hours per week with flexibility (of opening hours) to include the option of some evening opening.

- ii). Deliver a drop-in service for all young people (13-19) comprising:
  - IAG and information support to enable young people to access jobs, training or educational pathways (EET)
  - Support to help deal with barriers to their learning (homelessness, substance use, financial management, etc) and support for progression to EET
  - Support to access benefits (JSA, EMA, Care to Learn)
  - Support for preparation for employment (CV writing, Interview skills, etc)

- Ensure centres have access to IT hardware, including open access, and specialist guidance packages
- Jobs search and jobs matching service for young people including sourcing of vacancies from local employers
- Opportunities to access Personal Development Opportunities, Volunteering, and linkage to a range of service provision/providers
- Support to young people to access WBL courses and support progress of young people (for example, attending reviews) to achieve positive destinations to education, employment or training from WBL training
- Identification of any young person currently missing from education and support their access to it.

Where feasible and relevant to the young person's needs (and subject to space and safety considerations) enable interagency service delivery within access points (health, WBL, Teenage Pregnancy, etc).

CAPs should have the following characteristics:

- The environment should be perceived as a credible centre for all young people and not one that is seen as targeting only young people with high level needs
- The environment should make young people feel safe, comfortable and unthreatened
- The design should be relaxed and young people friendly
- The location should be high profile and prominent, preferably a High Street or similar location
- Opening hours should be subject to consultation with young people and KCC
- The service provided from a CAP should be accessible for young people with disabilities

iii). Track all young people in line with the Connexions national guidance for tracking (for example, "currency rules") and recording the status of young people on the Connexions service management information system (see E).

iv). Provide support to vulnerable/specific groups (for example, teenage parents, areas of rural isolation) through community outreach work targeted to specific community settings.

### **C: Learners with Special Educational Needs and LDD**

i). Offer IAG and support to all young people with LDD identified by the school SENCO

ii). Attend all Year 9 transition planning reviews convened by headteachers and contribute to the young person's transition plan

iii). Compile a Section 140 assessment of the learning and support needs of young people progressing to further study and training post year 11

iv). Ensure all parents and carers of young people requiring a Section 140 Assessment receive appropriate information and advice linking into home/work agreements with the Connexions Partnership for out of area young people

- v). Ensure all young people not resident but educated within the Kent area are seen and contribute to the Annual Plan and Section 140 Assessment
- vi). Identify those young people likely to be entitled to financial assistance and support their application complying with the Benefit Guidelines issued for the Connexions Service
- vii). Provide support and relevant services to all young people with LDD until they reach their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and ensure a smooth transition to adult services at a time appropriate to each young person

#### **D: Education other than at School**

- i). Enable young people educated other than at school including those within Young Offender units, ACP and PRUs to access appropriate IAG and intensive support and identify clear progression routes
- ii). Work with KCC to identify all young people educated other than at school and enable contact to be made to an agreed timescale to identify when support is required from Connexions. Ensure parents and carers are involved in the process
- iii). Provide information on benefits and support those who wish to make an application to support their progression to EET destinations
- iv). Work with KCC to identify the destinations of year 11 young people who are in education other than at school and provide relevant support particularly to those with no known destination
- v). Support YOS with pre-release plans for young people in custody as well as young people on community orders

#### **E: Management Information (MI) and MI Systems**

- i). Provide a suitable and stable ICT hardware platform to host a CCIS compliant software system to enable Connexions PAs & support staff to record interactions in accordance with national requirements and quality standards (including, crucially, data protection and client confidentiality)
- ii). Ensure accurate, complete and compliant data on the support provided to young people and associated information is sourced, processed and reported in line with Connexions national management information requirements
- iii). Provide (and where appropriate share) data to enable effective service planning and provide monthly operational performance monitoring and reporting to KCC, Department for Children, Schools & Families etc in line with national and local requirements and needs and in compliance with the monitoring procedures in the Contract
- iv). Publish an annual report showing the destinations of all Year 11, 12 and 13 young people
- v). Provide effective office support systems to all staff engaged in the delivery of this Contract

#### **F: Safety, Quality Assurance and Performance Management Framework**

## **Facilities Management & Service Contracts**

- i). Implement, monitor and review a risk based health and safety management system to comply with legislative requirements
- ii). Implement, monitor and review a QA and Performance Management Framework to ensure consistency in service delivery and enable effective business planning and operational performance which achieves the targets and outcomes in this Contract
- iii). Manage facilities, leases and service contracts to ensure service delivery in CAPs is to a continuously high standard

## **G: Marketing and Communications**

- i). Implement a Marketing and Communications plan to secure a high level of service and brand awareness in key stakeholders and maximise service access using a range of methodologies to engage young people, parents and carers
- ii). Provide a high quality website that reflects the needs of young people, parents and carers. Incorporate a Jobs Live section to enable young people to search for job opportunities electronically
- iii). Support schools in maintaining high quality effective Connexions and careers-related literature, including the provision of literature for pupils to assist them at key points in their education (14, 16 and 18)
- iii). Develop an annual Service Level Agreement with Connexions Direct or its successor to have available a service which provides 7 day access and to extended service times
- iv). Carry out all marketing and communication activities in accordance with national Connexions guidelines and guidance on the local marketing of youth support services to be provided by KCC
- v). Rebrand as Connexions Kent as appropriate

## **H). Community Chest**

- i). Implement an annual programme of service contracts (valued at not less than 5% and no more than 7% of the contract value) to enable service delivery by the Community and Voluntary sector to support the achievement of the targets and outputs in this Contract

## **I). Area Prospectus (AP) and Electronic Application Process (EAP)**

- i). In line with national guidance and Kent's needs, through the Area Prospectus Steering Group implement an electronic (web based) Area Prospectus for young people in Kent containing all learning opportunities available to them in the 13-19 phase
- ii). In line with national guidance and Kent's needs, through the Area Prospectus Steering Group implement (on a phased basis) an electronic (web based) application process for young people for 13 – 19 learning opportunities (initial phase 16+)

## **J). Young People's Engagement and Involvement**

- i). Systematically engage and involve young people in the governance of the Connexions Service through a Youth Board and implement the Youth Charter agreed by the board in all aspects of business planning and service delivery
- ii). Develop and implement a Young People's Engagement strategy to involve young people being involved in and shaping operational service delivery at locality level and through marketing and staff recruitment processes
- iii). Actively involve and enable all young people, especially those identified as the hardest to reach, to be effective in service planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation, improvements and the recruitment and selection of new staff

**K). NEETs Prevention and Young Peoples Re-engagement Programmes**

- i). Organise and deliver short term re-engagement programmes (Back on Track) for disengaged young people (post 16) (mix of motivational, taster and employability sessions). Enable and support these young people to progress to positive opportunities (pre-E2E, E2E, vocational training, etc)
- ii). Facilitate the involvement of young people who have disengaged or are in at risk groups to take up options offered by Opportunities Plus (if available) ,Kent Community Programme, Impact and other ESF funded programmes
- iii). Selectively target activities in school including self-esteem, anti-bullying and study skills programmes to reduce factors known to lead to NEETs
- iv). Organise an annual programme of local incentives to re-engage NEETs
- v). Make full use of MI analysis to target and respond to clusters of NEETs. To simultaneously introduce preventative strategies in these areas
- vi). Work with and support KCC, schools and other local partners to raise the expectations and aspirations of Kent young people by giving all 13-19 year olds the very best careers as outlined in "Towards 2010"

**L). Activity Agreement (Long Term NEETs) (NB: This aspect is subject to Treasury revenue resources continuing to be available to the Connexions Partnership Kent & Medway)**

- i). Organise and deliver 20-week term re-engagement programmes for disengaged young people who have been NEET for 20 weeks+. Recruit and engage relevant young people (post 16) (mix of motivational, taster and employability sessions). Enable and support these young people to progress to positive opportunities (pre-E2E, E2E, vocational training, jobs, etc)

**M): Support to Parents/Carers**

- i). Ensure that parents/carers of Connexions-eligible young people are aware of Connexions services on offer
- ii). Provide information and support to parents/carers to help and encourage them to be involved at key decision points of Years 9 and 11 and when leaving post compulsory education



iii). Identify innovative and appropriate ways of involving and engaging the parents/carers of young people at risk of being NEET post-16

**N). Benefits and Regulations Concerning Work**

i). Provide information on legislation about work and employment rights, including gender, race, disability, health and safety, disclosure of convictions and equal pay, and information on benefits and how to claim them

ii). Provide young people with general information about Young Persons Bridging Allowance, Jobseekers Allowance, extended Child Benefit and other social security benefits. This includes giving details about how these allowances/benefits can be claimed and the rights and responsibilities associated with them

iii). Provide arrangements for young people to register for work or learning, and be able to confirm a young person's registration with Jobcentre Plus where required

**O): Working with Employers, Vacancy Handling and Work Experience Support**

i). Gather and publicise information on vacancies for young people who are eligible for Connexions services, including working with similar service providers in adjacent areas. Make full use of Labour Market Information towards this.

ii). Work with young people and employers to match young people to suitable vacancies and support the recruitment process where applicable

iii). Advertise vacancies in the Connexions Access Points as appropriate, and in schools and colleges at appropriate times of year and on web sites

iv). Offer advice and support to employers on issues such as relevant legislation on vacancies that may be suitable for Connexions clients

v). Monitor employer satisfaction with the services provided to them and amend delivery as appropriate

vi). Work with local employer networks and business support groups to encourage both awareness of the Connexions service and young people as potential employees

vii). Support young people in preparation for work experience placements and provide post work experience support

**P). Training and Development (for Schools – pre & post 16) – Careers Education and Guidance (CEG)**

i). Organise, publicise and deliver area-based approach to INSET training programmes for those staff in schools leading on CEG development or supporting CEG development within the school curriculum. Deliver a revised programme that is complementary to the changing 13-19 agenda for providers

ii). Promote the nationally accredited Investors in Careers standard in schools and assist those schools who pursue this standard with specialist professional support

iii). Assist all secondary schools to implement the national IAG standard requirements

iv). Offer Morrisby (learner profiling) Psychometric Testing to schools on an 'at cost' basis and assist with specialist professional support

v). Organise, publicise and deliver (in collaboration with UCAS and subject to their funding support and in collaboration with Aim Higher's mission for more young people to enter HE) an annual HE Convention (at University of Kent) to enable learners aspiring to HE to meet over 120 HE providers, attend workshops (eg Student Finance) and see a HE setting. Attendance approx 7,000 per annum

vi). Organise, publicise and deliver a CEG Resources Fair which enables school staff & other professionals to meet a range of resource providers and see current CEG resource developments and materials

vii). Supply and promote web-based e-portfolios for young people

viii). Provide Labour Market Information to support the delivery of CEG in schools

ix). Organise and deliver a programme of INSET training on a cluster basis

#### **Q). Careers Education and Guidance – Innovation and Excellence**

**This section will be made more specific following the completion of the University of Warwick's audit and its recommendations**

i). Support schools in their delivery of Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) through:

- Providing a survey of CEG provision in a selection of schools

- Providing an e-portfolio project

- Providing a Labour Market Information and INSET pilot for schools research project

- Providing vocational support at Whitstable CC, Thanet Skills studio and other vocational centres

- Providing a range of CEG projects, for example, Maidstone Year 7 guidance initiative

#### **R). Training and Development – Staff**

i). Run an NVQ accredited training centre and programme to enable Connexions PA's to be professionally trained, assessed, mentored and supported to achieve an NVQ4 (Guidance qualification). Provide staff to manage and implement this programme across Kent

ii). Secure Foundation Degree provision for Connexions PAs with intensive roles and provide mentoring support (Learning & Development Coaches) to assist their progress towards full qualification

iii). Provide an annual Training Programme to support the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of all staff in line with staff and service development needs identified through the Appraisal Programme

iv). Provide comprehensive induction centrally and locally to ensure new staff are aware of key service priorities on Child Protection, Confidentiality, etc, very early in their induction period

v). Develop staff through an annual appraisal process

### **S). Human Resources**

i). Ensure that appropriate and adequate staffing and support is committed to achieve the targets and outcomes of this Contract

### **T). Finance and Payroll**

i). Provide a complete finance service function for the Connexions service to comply fully with national finance standards and legal requirements and to be subject to regular scrutiny (internal and independent external audit)

### **U). Integrated Working and Processes**

i). Ensure relevant staff engage in the multi-agency training for Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Lead Professional function and ContactPoint training

ii). Ensure staff undertake CAF and Lead Professional function where appropriate

iii). Subject to the impact on resources, engage in the development of local Children's Trusts arrangements and integrated teams

iv). Provide (and where appropriate share) data and information to enable effective case working with other agencies

## **3. Targets and Outputs**

### **Targets**

Annual performance targets will be set for this Contract. Connexions has a headline target of reducing NEETs in the 16-18 year old group. Connexions has some secondary targets where its role is to support the relevant responsible Council functions or external agencies/ organisations in their achievement of the target.

The table below summarises the year 1 targets (i.e. targets relating to the 2008/09 contract year). Targets in year 2 will be reviewed in the light of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kent Local Area Agreement and performance in year 1.

### **Year 1 Targets – 2008/09**

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>NUMBERS or %</b>
<b>HEADLINE TARGET</b>	
Maximum % of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) in November 2008	4.94%
Local targets for the % of 16-18 year olds NEET have been agreed for the 3 areas with the highest levels of youth unemployment:	
Thanet	7.2% (from 9.46% in Nov 2006)
Swale	6.88% (from 8.82% in Nov 2006)
Folkestone	6.07% (from 7.22% in Nov 2006)

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>NUMBERS or %</b>
<b>KEY TARGETS</b>	
Maximum % of 16-18 year olds whose current activity is "not known"	3.5% (this target may change pending discussions with GOSE)
Reduce the % of 16-19 year olds with LDD who are NEET	7.65% (from 10.36% in Nov 2006)
% increase in the jobs sourced by employer liaison consultants (comparing April-Nov 2007 and April-Nov 2008)	25%
<b>STATUTORY TARGET</b>	
% of Section 140 assessments completed where no refusal by parent/carer	100%
<b>SECONDARY TARGETS</b>	
% of care leavers in EET	tba
% of young offenders in EET in line with YOS definition and target	90%
% of 17 year olds participating in education and training	79% (from 73% in 2005/6)
<b>INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE</b>	
% of schools achieving quality award for CEG	10%
% of schools attending cluster based IAG INSET	100%
% of young people in vocational centres receiving tailored IAG	100%
% of young people on the Skill Force programme given tailored IAG	100%
% of young people surveyed who felt that the Connexions Service had a positive impact on their decision making	95%
<b>INTEGRATED WORKING AND PROCESSES</b>	
% of PAs trained in integrated processes such as CAF, Lead Professional and ContactPoint	100%
% of PAs included in 13-19 integrated teams	tba

## Outputs

It is anticipated that the Services delivered in this Contract will contribute to the 5 Every Child Matters Outcomes in Kent;

- supporting young people to have a healthy lifestyle, including the best possible physical, mental, emotional and sexual health
- helping safeguarding young people from harm
- supporting young people to enjoy their teenage years and achieve their aspirations
- supporting young people to improve local services for young people in their area/community
- providing impartial high quality information advice and guidance to encourage and support young people to enter and remain in education, employment and training (EET)

## 4. Service Development and Standards

An annual Business and Service Delivery Plan will be produced, detailing how the services within this specification will be delivered. The format of the Plan will be

agreed by KCC and Connexions Partnership Kent and Medway Limited but will include quantitative information on young people in Kent including numbers of young people with specific needs and/or barriers to participation in EET. The Plan will be formally approved by both parties in advance of the start of the Contract year.

It is anticipated that the services in this Contract will be delivered and developed in alignment with the development of local Children's Trust arrangements, Integrated Youth Support Services and 14-19 strategic developments in Kent. This will include the involvement of Connexions Partnership Kent & Medway in multi-agency developments of youth support services in Kent, including moves to more standardised processes and procedures (for example, Common Assessment Framework, ContactPoint) and representation in appropriate governance and structures with KCC and its partners.

In respect of the 14-19 agenda this will include:

- Representation on each of the 10 local 14-19 Planning Fora
- Working with the Management Information representatives of CFE and LSC to develop an annual data set for the 14-19 Planning Fora

It is anticipated that the existing contracts held by Connexions Partnership Kent and Medway Limited with third parties for the delivery of services within this specification will continue, subject to continuing satisfactory contract performance by the third parties.

Services will comply with the national "Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)"

All young people should be provided with information on confidentiality arrangements and where applicable their consent is obtained.

Information provided in faith schools/providers should reflect the ethos of the institution.

All services should be delivered with an inclusive ethos which reflects the needs of specific groups such as young people:

- from BME groups
- with LDD
- physically impaired
- from a travelling community
- a refugee or asylum seeker
- in Local Authority Care
- a substance misuser
- at risk of offending and re-offending
- pregnant or a young parent
- homeless
- gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender

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